Maharishi Mahesh Yogi
EGO, INTELLECT, MIND, ANGER—BUT MOSTLY EGO
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Q. After we've gone through all the fertilizers coming with the five-year course, could it be said that when we're in constant contact with the field of transcendental bliss that we are transcending with every perception?

MMY: No. That which was transcendental before has creeped in the field of all thinking and perception. So that nothing is transcendental any more now. And that is Cosmic Consciousness. When the transcendental Absolute creeps into the field of relativity, that is Cosmic Consciousness.

Time is approaching fast. It won't be after all the fertilizers have been practiced. It will be much before that. It will be much before that.

Q. (inaudible)

MMY: The question is: what is the difference between mind, ego, and intellect? How they are related with one another, and how we find them and how we experience them.

How many have felt sometime during meditation an impulse of thought coming in? This is the nature of the mind. We know mind from thought. This is the nature of the mind, this is how the mind functions.

What is its connection with the intellect? How many have felt that the impulse of thought is coming and now you decide No. And that impulse doesn't come in, it gets destroyed. Now this is the display of intellect. Intellect is decisive. Mind is thinking.

Thinking faculty of the ego is called mind. Deciding faculty of the ego is called intellect. And ego is that whose faculties are these: The perceiver. The doer. The enjoyer.

Someone who in the state of ignorance remains bound by the experience: We see the flower and only the flower remains and the see-er is no more. See-er is no more. And that [see-er] is the ego. Individuality of cosmic life is the individual ego.

The reflection of the omnipresent Being on nervous system—that reflection is the ego. In Sanskrit it is called chidabhas. Now this word is compound of two words, chit and abhas. Chit means Being. Abhas is reflection. When two are pronounced together t becomes d in Sanskrit. Chidabhas. Reflection of Being is the ego. Chidabhas. Reflection of the ego.

Q. The reflection of Being must be in the finest field of the relative, it can't be in the nervous system because it's too far away from Being. The reflection must be in the buddhi which is the finest in the relative.

MMY: If it were like that, then buddhi would have been the cause of the abhas, see? Buddhi is just a tendency of the jiva. Tendency. Buddhi is just a tendency of ego, or chidabhas. Abhasa is reflection. Reflection of Being on what? On the nervous system. Like the sun is shining everywhere, and then there is a glass of water. The glass of water produces a reflection of the sun. The sun that is everywhere, the same sun is on the rim of the glass. But because of the water it reflects. Because of nervous system—any nervous system, ant or elephant or tree or anything. That reflection is said to be the ego, or the doer, the experiencer, the knower, the I.

I is a portion of the omnipresent Being arrested by the nervous system in this time and space. It's in bondage. When through Transcendental Meditation the system comes to a state of restful alertness, the nervous system comes to a state of restful alertness, this steady state of nervous system produces the reflection completely like the omnipresent Being which is shining everywhere.

We can imagine a muddy water in the glass. Reflection is dim. Now let the mud be purified, or settle down, and purified and purified and purified. The water becomes very clear.

Let that very clear water which is producing very clear reflection, let it be somehow more purified in the sense that the reflection begins to be more and more like the sun in the surroundings, and if the water could be brought down to a state where it is capable of producing a reflection as good as the sun in the surroundings, then that will be the most purified state of water. Just like that. Being is omnipresent, bliss consciousness, pure eternal absolute non-changing, Being. Reflected by the nervous system in the form of an individual ego. We take the mind of the individual ego, we take the ego to that level where the ego expands and becomes cosmic. This is possible only when the nervous system becomes pure and pure and pure and pure.

It is our experience that when you transcend and that pure awareness is there, that pure awareness is the reflection of the Being on nervous system, but it is as good, as pure, as perfect as Being itself.... And then the individual has become cosmic—universal. Through transcendental meditation what we are doing, we only creating a situation on the nervous system that it will reflect the omnipresent Being in its true character, in its true nature. And when the system is so cultured through this practice, then the individual ego is as good as cosmic ego, cosmic Life. Then that individual life is...cosmic life. Individual consciousness is cosmic consciousness.

This is our program. And what we are doing? This physical structure is shaken from activity to no activity, from no activity to activity, we are swinging the nervous system, subjecting it to activity and then to gradually to least activity, then gradually to normal activity. The swinging of the physical structure cultures it and produces in it the capability of reflecting that pure Being in its pure state. And that is how, by virtue of the permanency of physical culture, we start living permanently pure consciousness, or bliss consciousness, or absolute Being. Or eternal Life. This is how eternal Life begins to be lived by the individual. By virtue of swinging the nervous system back and forth and back and forth.

So this is the story of ego. It is the reflection of the omnipresent Being on the nervous system, and by virtue of this wonderful system of Transcendental Meditation, it becomes possible for the individual, isolated, arrested ego to gain the state of unbounded, eternal Being. Yes?

Q. How does this individual ego relate to the individual germ of life—life force that is born and reborn. Is it the same?

MMY: Yes. Individual ego is that. The whole thing, individual ego, intellect, mind, senses, and the entire nervous system is just the projection of the whole thing. And it keeps on projecting, projecting, projecting, evolving, evolving, becoming better and better and better, and when it is at its best, then it has the ability of producing the individuality on the level of cosmic reality. So as long as the nervous system has not become so refined that it can produce the ego parallel to the universal Being, so long it keeps on being reborn and reborn and reborn.

Q. Could you please explain the collision theory of anger, and why the intellect does not prevent anger.

MMY: Anger is just the result of the ability of the nervous system to throw off the foreign material. The nervous system is so framed that it cannot accept foreign material for long time. If some foreign material has come in due to which some stress and strain is deposited there, the system likes to throw it out. And that expresses as anger.

Q. In the Gita you say that desires come into some kind of collision, and this collision produces anger. How does that relate to stresses and strains thrown off by the nervous system?

MMY: Anger is not produced by desire. It's produced by the resistance to desire. Desire wants to flow out toward fulfillment. And if there is a resistance, it bubbles up into some heated energy. That is anger. Anger is just the expression of extra energy generated due to the resistance on the path of desire toward fulfillment.

Q. Couldn't the intellect choose which desires go through...

MMY: Yes, intellect always chooses. Because a desire—I'll make a house, I'll build a home—fine. This design, this design, this design, this design, hundred designs. The intellect selects this, and then the senses go out to build it. Only those desires which are accepted by the intellect begin to flow towards fulfillment.

Q. Maharishi, I have a question about the ego. The Indian philosopher Patanjali says the mind has three components: manas, buddhi, and ahamkar...

MMY: That ahamkara is ego.

Q. My question is: he says that the person says "I know this" and this ego sense identification is false. A modern analogy would be: you ask the electric bulb what is electrical energy, and the electric bulb starts to describe it as a round, bulbous glass with a filament. And this is the ego saying: I know this, I am that. That the ego sense is false and the source of much misery and suffering in the world, because it causes constant anxiety.... Now you seem to say that the ego is individuality, very different from this ego sense. I'd like to have it clarified.

MMY: The thing is, when I say "I know this," what is happening is the image of this falls through the retina, and falls on the screen of the mind, and this is imprinted there. Where? On the screen of bliss consciousness, which is the pure nature of the mind. So when I say this, what I am doing is losing my own awareness and giving all importance to this. And when I have lost my own awareness, when the see-er himself is not aware of himself, then what is the basis of the seeing? That is why Patanjali says, I am seeing this is unreal. Because the see-er is absent. When the see-er is in ignorance, how can the sight be real?

Q. The only real see-er is the Being, the real self.

MMY: No. That is not the see-er, it is the Being. The see-er is the individual. Out of that cosmic Being, the individual. And that is ego.

So what we are doing through meditation is: we are expanding the ego and expanding the ego and expanding the ego. We are making it big, unbounded, eternal. We are not trying to bring extinction to ego. We are expanding the ego and expanding the ego, we are making our existence unbounded. We are not killing the ego. Because what we find is: we don't have to try to kill the ego, it's already killed.

If we have not expanded the ego, then every experience kills it. Every experience kills the ego—where is ego? I say "I see the flower" but then where is the I? Who is the I? Who I am? If the self is out of awareness, then the flower only is in awareness, then if the self is out of knowledge, then what is the basis of this knowledge? That means this knowledge is false.

For that reason we don't blame the ego—we expand the ego, make the ego bigger, make it universal ego. Big. Huge. From that level we are able to retain that universal ego, and yet able to act as an individual by virtue of nervous system.

Q. Could you tell us some more about Guru Dev?
[applause]

MMY: When we are talking of ego....[laughter]. We are entering into a program of expansion for three days, and after that we'll talk...

Q. What you said about the ego appears to me to be contradictory and I'd like to clear it up. You said that the ego projects the intellect, the mind, the senses and the body. And the nervous system is part of the body. Yet you've also said that the ego is only the reflection of Being upon the body. So I have in my mind the chicken and the egg problem of which came first: the ego or the nervous system. And there are some things which would lead me to believe that the ego came first. Your explanation of how creation first came out of the three gunas, and then ego and so on, and the objective world was created. And things like

reincarnation—where is the ego between lives, and spirits that want nervous systems, and so forth. So could you clear this up?

MMY: This physical nervous system is the creation of the ego, which existed in a more subtle form of nervous system before this body was taken up. When this body falls down then subtle kind of nervous system, this is too gross, eh, too gross to go somewhere in the womb of mother... the whole individuality gets a home in the aerial nervous system, aerial body. Aerial body. There's a nervous system, but aerial. So as long as there is nervous system there is a chance of perception. When this nervous system falls down, the subtle body—that is aerial—

Q. What do you mean by aerial?

MMY: Just aerial [laughter]. Body of air. Air.

Q. Maharishi, this brings up another question. I think it's sort of part of the same question. You said that air is one of the five elements of physical objective creation, that are created apart from and after the individuality. Space is also one of these elements. So I had the idea that there are two fields of the relative: a subjective in which space does not exist but time does, and then an objective wherein space and time both exist. And if this is true, then it's hard for me to imagine the ego existing as a reflection of some subtle nervous system when it has to exist prior to the creation of space. And also air, if it's an aerial body.

MMY: Ego would not be located without a nervous system. Nervous system, ego... ego is the finest of the whole structure, gross, grossest body and then finer than that is the senses, mind, intellect, ego. Beyond the ego is Being. ...Ego is like the seed which has within it the possibility of the whole tree. Ego is the seed of life we could say, so it has the intellect, mind, senses, prana, the body also. It's there. It has all kinds of impressions stored in it. And therefore it is where the impressions are stored, in the subtle body.

This gross body is just a projection of the subtle body. So when we say ego, intellect, and the whole thing, then we mean the nervous system is there whether in the gross form or in the subtle form. Whether this earthly nervous system or aerial nervous system, fiery nervous system, watery nervous system Could be any type. But there has to be nervous system for the ego to be. There has to be ego for the nervous system to be.

Q. Well there's still the question of the two phases of reality, that I still don't understand. You say that you have ego, intellect, mind, senses first and then, from that is created the five elements: fire, earth, air, water and space. Now you're saying that the ego itself is the reflection of the nervous system in some in one of these elements. So I still have the problem of which came first.

MMY: In the relative life, for the ego to be, the whole thing is there. Maybe in the seed form. But it's there.

Q. Would you care to explain what it means by "it's there" ?

MMY: The whole thing. The ego—for the ego to be—ego I just explained is a reflection. Now for the reflection to be the reflector has to be. And that original substance of which the reflection, that has to be.

So that original substance is Being. Now, for ego to be, out of that Being—Being is omnipresent Life—from that the individual life. For that to be, something of individual nature has to be. For the tree to be, the seed has to be. For the seed to be, the tree has to be contained in it.

The ego all by itself won't be ego. It won't be reflection. It is the reflection of someone on someone.
So there has to be some expression, and that expression is nervous system. In the ego itself, there is that whole body. Otherwise it won't be an isolated ego.

Q. Are you saying that the substance upon which the reflection appears is part of the reflection itself?

MMY: Yes. Because the whole thing is just the projection of one bigger, bigger, bigger, grosser, grosser manifestation. Just as you put it.

Q. It also solves a problem of free will, I think.

MMY: The whole thing is a projection of one thing.

Q. When I said I understood finally the problem of free will, some people back here and I started to talk about this. We have a conceptualization of it that we'd like to check out with you. What I thought was, since the ego was both a projection and a reflection, and it's reflecting off of itself, then it's nothing but a decision. And there's no substance underlying that decision, to simply be. And to me this means that Being itself is free will, and nothing exists but free will, and that is Being. Now some of the other people that I've been talking to here say that Being underlies free will. I think Being is free will now. Who's right? Or do neither of us understand what's happening?

MMY: In as much as Being is everything, Being is free will. Because that is the ultimate absolute reality of life. Like the sap. With all the manifestations on the surface, underlying reality is: the sap. So there is one ultimate reality, and that is Being. And when our life in the relative field becomes saturated with Being, when Being displays itself on the conscious level without a break all the time, then is that situation which you say Being is free will. And that free will then is on the cosmic level. And that is the cosmic intelligence underlying and conducting the whole course of cosmic life.

Q. Could then ignorance be said to be the decision to believe that you're not making your own decisions?

MMY: The life without the fullness of Being is the life in ignorance. And that is a life in mistake, that's a mistaken phase of life. The correct phase of life is: in the fullness of Being at all times. That's why we want to get over this ignorance soon. So that we start on a real level of life.

Q. Maharishi, some time ago you said that the soul is a reflection of Being upon the nervous system. Now I was wondering if perhaps the soul could be attached to the subtle nervous system, and the ego could be attached to the relative physical world.

MMY: Soul can be used for even Being and even ego. Soul is a word which needs the context to show the meaning. "My soul is unhappy"—but Being can never be unhappy. That means relative aspect of it—the reflection.

Q. I'd like to ask another question. Absolute Being is within us all. Now I wonder, could there be some sort of a duality here? And that absolute Being is all of creation, or Being is a form of all that is creation. And could we also have sort of a fragment, an individual part of the Being that is ours ourselves?

MMY: And that belongs to the share of the ignorance. That is the share of the ignorance. That is the joy of ignorance.

Q. Maharishi, I have two questions that I think will finalize an entire process of changing philosophies. I came here with one set and I'm having it replaced. Now the statement that was made earlier about the ego being a manifestation or a reflection of the nervous system and vice versa—is this consistent with the statement that the Absolute, when it manifests, no matter where it manifests, it always manifests in duality, and that two things become at once and are in effect supporting each other, so that they may exist.

MMY: That is our experience. When we get to the Absolute and come out from there, we come out more energetic, more intelligent, happier. So, the Absolute is there to support our relative life. The treasury is there to support the market.

Q. OK—the final question. And this is something that...

MMY: Actuality: the actuality of the situation—note the words—the actuality of the situation that lies between the Absolute and the Relative is really known when the finest field of relative becomes a living reality of life along with the absolute Being.

Finest relative and Absolute Being. When both simultaneously begin to be a living reality of day to day life, then the actuality of the situation lying between them—the situation at the borderline of the Absolute and the Relative—at that time it becomes clear.

We'll see some time what it is like. That is going to be a direct cognition—cognition. And then is the actuality known thoroughly by direct experience. And we are preparing for that. We are preparing for a simultaneous living of the Absolute and finest relative.

Q. I had one more question. Now this should do it. Do we at this moment possess, have, although unaware of, a relative body on every level of creation? And is the goal to expand our consciousness to be aware of this fact.

MMY: There is a very old proverb: Whatever is there in the atom, is there in the whole universe. Now what is there in the whole universe? Very gross layers of creation, subtle layers of creation, subtlest layer of creation, and Transcendental Being—absolute level of life. And this gross and subtle and subtlest and transcendent, this whole sphere is contained in every state of existence.

Very gross body we have, and this subtle and subtle and subtle and the senses and the mind and intellect and ego, transcending the ego, the Being. It's there, the whole thing.

Now, we don't contain within ourself all the bodies that there may be in different layers of creation throughout the cosmos. But all those bodies are made of [what] this body is made of. All the gross layers, subtle layers, subtlest layer, transcendental Absolute, the whole thing is there. Whatever is there, anywhere, is here and now within us.

That is the reason why what we are doing is sharpening our agency of experience. And we will be able to experience any layer of creation within ourself. And when our agency of experience, our faculty of experience, is refined enough to take a stand at any subtle strata within us, then that subtle strata in creation will be our platform of knowledge. Could be our platform of activity also.

That is the reason why—particularly when we are meditation—we are going deep within, exercising our faculty of experience to experience finer and finer and finer and finer—enabling them to become finest possible so that we could take a stand at any stand at any layer of creation and be in that layer, act in that layer, control that layer, do whatever we want to do in that strata of life.

Transcript ends here, but tape continues….